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THE COMMONWEALTH.

Hon. John Young Brown.

The eloquent young Congressman from the 5th district, in reply to a question propounded by Mr. Anderson on the 21st February, spoke as follows:

Mr. BROWN. Mr. Chairman, I will answer the question of my colleague. As an American citizen, my first, highest, holiest ambition has been to do all within the power of my humble abilities to contribute to the perpetuity, prosperity, and renown of this Union. The boast of the Roman was: "Ego sum Romanus civis." Mine has been: "I am an American citizen;" for about that name gathers as much of glory as any title has ever borne. Our grand mission has been one of civilization, of advancing the cause of civil liberty, of nurturing and developing the arts and sciences, and of expanding our power on land and sea. Proud, indeed, have been our achievements; and it was hoped all this greatness rested upon a safe and unwavering basis. But some of the pillars of the Union are fallen, others crumbling, and the magnificent fabric reels under the fury of the long impending storm.

In the midst of this so far bloodless, yet momentous, revolution, it is with bounding pride that I speak of my native old Kentucky—God bless her! Her history, as proud as that of any member of this Confederacy, justifies me in saying that her loyalty to this Union must go unchallenged. Suffering most, and suffering longest, she has murmured least. Her voice and her hopes, in this tremendous crisis, have been and are for peace, for conciliation, for compromise, and for the Union. Her soil entombs the canonized bones of the great commander, Clay. Her commission sent to the Senate the pure and patriotic pacifier, Crittenden. Her commissioners are now in council in this capital, pleading for adjustment, and urging the old Roman Guthrie's propositions. The bones of her brave pioneers are buried on northwestern plains, where they fell defending the homes, wives and children, of men whose degenerate and unworthy representatives on this door impeach her character and defame her institutions. High, patriotic, and commanding is her position. Look at her! [Applause.]

As one of her sons and Representatives in this Congress, inspired by the spirit of her elevated love for what our fathers gave us, I am now, as I always have been, for the Union; a Union of equality, justice, fraternity, and comity between its members, wherein the rights and honor of my fellow citizens will be secured.

Right-heartedly do I endorse the compliment paid my constituents by the gentleman from the fourth district, [Mr. Anderson.] Congratulating him upon his sudden affection for the Catholics, whom he mentions, I can confidently tell him that never was eloquence more worthily bestowed. Yes, the Catholics there, alike chivalric, generous, and true, with Protestants, are for the Union. All war negotiation exhausted, every effort for compromise first, before they are for changing their status; but, when the fatal and startling fact is before them, that there can be no peace, the loyalty of Kentucky's sons is not such as will permit them to be indifferent and inactive, when the swords of Lincoln's minions are drawn to cut the throats of their southern brethren.

"Lay not that flatteringunction to your soul." If an effort be made to coerce her sister States, the moment that rings the echo of the first gun of that conflict over her hills and valleys, will find her unerring riflemen gathering for the rescue of the South, and in battle will she meet the forces of this Government, which she is now doing most to preserve.

Such an unholy, fratricidal, and causeless war will precipitate my State to the bosom of the southern confederacy; and as she may be the last to join, once the partner of its fortunes, she will be the last to leave it, come what may.

Such is my unionism; and I believe I speak the sentiment of my State. Her Legislature, without distinction of party, have almost unanimously resolved that, in the event force is used against the States which have withdrawn from the Union, Kentucky will resist. Again, I answer, she is for peace, compromise and the Union.

If the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. Stevens], who just now said he was for collecting the revenue in southern ports, for reinforcing and recapturing southern ports from the possession of "robbers and traitors," as he fiercely brands them—foreshadows the policy of the incoming Administration, then this matter is beyond accommodation, and the sooner Kentucky knows it, the better. Judging from Mr. Lincoln's Indianapolis speech, and his conversation with Mr. Hutchinson, which have been alluded to in this debate, it seems, indeed, that we are to be plunged into the midst of the horrors of civil war. God forbid it! Coercion is an insane, wicked, atrocious policy. Its only rewards will be the wreck of commerce; the utter stagnation of trade; the bankruptcy of capitalists and workmen of every occupation North and South; the desolation of fair fields and happy homes; and a gulf between the two sections filled with blood, hate and vengeance, will be made, and it will only be crossed for purposes of murder and rapine.

Do you Republicans think you can conquer the South? I tell you, if you achieve it, it will be a barren victory. Suppose you delineate the population of the confederated States; suppose you burn their homes, and drive their people to the caves and swamps; what will you have accomplished? Do you expect to hold them as conquered provinces? Vain and infamous is such a dream. From the blood of your victims, as from the fabled dragon's teeth, will spring up crops of armed men, whose religion it will be to hate and curse you, to wage an impious war of revenge upon you on land and sea; to pursue and hunt down you and your children and your children's children; and this they will do till the last man of the South perishes. You must exterminate them before your task will be done.

I have never defended the abstract right of secession. The recent statements in the papers that I did, was a misreport. My remarks on the postal bill are correctly given in the *Globe*. I said I recognized the independence of the States which have left the Union, and I say so still. I have been raised in a school of politics in which the abstract right of secession is not indorsed; but I do subscribe to the sentiment contained in the Declaration of Independence—that first grand chart of our liberties: that when Governments become destructive of the ends for which they were created, then the people, from whose consent Governments derive their just powers, have the inherent right to alter or abolish them. I call the action of the confederated States of the South *revolution*. Revolution does not necessarily involve the idea of battles and bloodshed to make it successful. The southern government stands

before us and the world, a living fact; and if we would not madly throw away all the power and glory and prosperity we have achieved as a people, you must deal with it as such, by recognizing its independence, and not madly and suicidally attempting its destruction.

Kentucky's loyalty to the Union will not be preserved at the dear price of aiding men in war on the South who denounce her institutions, aid in the escape of her property, deny her that comity due her, and wish to destroy her equality as a sovereign member of the Confederacy. Never, sir, never! And if the dreaded necessity of her leaving you shall come, it will be when negotiation fails, when her entreaties are refused, and you persist in denying what is due her interests and honor; and if she must leave the Union, it will be upon the divine, inherent right affirmed in the Declaration of Independence that I shall rest her vindication, so far as I may have to defend it.

To me the future is full of gloom. For nearly three months have I sat here hoping for a settlement of these distracting questions. The people want them settled. Southern men who buy the goods and machinery and products of the North, and by whose patronage your great cities have been built up, and the immense fortunes of your merchants and manufacturers accumulated, have been proud of your prosperity; for your States were a part of their country. It is now to come upon North and South, by reason of the fanaticism and blind ambition of the politicians of this Congress. You Republicans are firm, unyielding, unreasonable. You place the Chicago platform and its miserable dogmas above your country and its Constitution, and in the attempted preservation of that catechism of your political faith you will wreck the nation.

It does seem that God has struck our people with madness and blindness. Is it we—shall it be—that this Government, the refuge of the exile, and the hope of the lovers of freedom throughout the world, so glorious in its past history, so precious in its splendid promises for the future, if peace is preserved and compromise accepted, is to fall to ruin, and its sad fate furnish another chapter to history's national epitaph? It is treason to human hope thus to let it perish.

I appeal to Republicans to come to the rescue; to do their duty to themselves, to the country, and posterity; and, instead of speeches full of denunciation and insulting menaces to the South, give us our constitutional rights, concede our reasonable requests and save the Republic. Those of you who, in an unselfish spirit of patriotism, shall shake off the fetters of party, and, as heroes, advocate compromise on a fair basis, will receive the applause and gratitude of present and after times; but others, who are for party above country and Constitution, and who, now, dear to the warnings of reason, and dead to the noble inspirations of a pure love of country, are resisting compromise, and urging a war in which brother must shed brother's blood, and whose prospective horrors sicken the heart to contemplate, will, if their damnable policy be pursued, be tried, while living, with execration, and when dead,

"A thousand years from now,
Will sit pale ghosts upon the Stygian shore,
And read their acts by the red light of hell."

I hope that my colleague's question is answered. In response to his interrogatory, I have said much more than I intended when I arose. I thank the gentleman from Virginia [Mr. Garnett] for his courtesy in yielding me the floor, and I beg that he will accept my apologies for having so long trespassed upon his time.

LINCOLN'S INAUGURAL ADDRESS:

Fellow-Citizens of the United States:

In compliance with a custom as old as the Government itself, I appear before you to address you briefly, and to take in your presence the oath prescribed by the Constitution of the United States, taken by the President before he enters upon the execution of his office. I do not consider it necessary at present to repeat all the oaths of administration about which there is no especial anxiety or excitement. The apprehension seems to exist among the people of the southern States that by the accession of a Republican administration their property and their peace and personal security are to be endangered. There has been no reasonable cause for such apprehension; indeed, the most ample evidence to the contrary has all the while existed and been open to their inspection. It is found in nearly all the published speeches of him who now addresses you. I do not quote from one of those speeches where I declare that I have no purpose, directly or indirectly, to interfere with the institution of slavery in the States where it exists. I believe I have no lawful right to do so, and I have no inclination to do so. Those who nominated and elected me did not wish me to make any pledge that I would not do. The Constitution before me sets out the executive of his office. I do not consider it necessary at present to repeat all the oaths of administration about which there is no especial anxiety or excitement. The apprehension seems to exist among the people of the southern States that by the accession of a Republican administration their property and their peace and personal security are to be endangered. There has been no reasonable cause for such apprehension; indeed, the most ample evidence to the contrary has all the while existed and been open to their inspection. 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